



the Inside Scoop...of OJJ

Mission:

The Office of Juvenile Justice protects the public by providing safe and effective individualized services to youth, who will become productive, law-abiding citizens.



Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary

It's truly amazing that after that non-winter we enjoyed, we still look forward to the mild weather and abundant blooms that come with spring. Of course spring also brings the legislative session, which is now in full swing. Our first budget hearing took place very early, so we're just waiting to see how it all turns out. Meanwhile, we can enjoy the mild weather and the flowers.

Speaking of weather, our neighbors to the west in Texas recently suffered a devastating swarm of tornadoes, and while we were pasted with heavy rains and ground-shaking thunder and lightning, we were spared the worst. I would ask that everyone send our thoughts and prayers to our friends in Texas; we in Louisiana know all too well how it feels to have your home and your town gone with the wind.

As ever, this month's *Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is full of news. From playing basketball with our youth to fixing flats for our co-workers, from encouraging former clients to transporting youth at Dark-Thirty in the morning, you meet the mission. I'm proud of you, and proud to be a part of the team.

"Doc" *Dr. Mary L. Livers*

P.S. – if you try my aunt's pimiento cheese recipe on page 2, drop me a line and let me know how it turned out.

The Daily Motivator

Be a Better You

No matter what the future brings, it will always bring you the opportunity to make a positive difference. No matter what may happen, you can always respond with integrity and positive purpose.

You can apply the very best of your wisdom and experience to the situations in which you have influence. And you can adjust and adapt to those situations over which you have little or no control. There's no point in worrying about the future, because your worry will not cause anything positive to happen. Instead, focus on making good and valuable use of the time you have right now, to grow stronger, more capable, more knowledgeable and experienced.

Position yourself so you can find and bring to life the positive value that exists in every situation. Prepare yourself to successfully move forward even in the face of challenge, frustration and uncertainty. The way to assure a better future is to be a better you, right here and right now. The strength you build within your own life is a powerful tool you can use to create prosperity and fulfillment in any environment.

Every moment is an opportunity to add to that strength by living with love, gratitude, authenticity and positive purpose. Do what it takes to be a better you right now, and build a better world in the days, months and years to come. — Ralph Marston



The falls, Fort Worth Botanic Garden. Shared by Tallulah AC3 Martha Hattaway.

CQIS POLICY UPDATES

Approved:

- A.1.1 Policy and Correspondence Distribution 2-22-12
- A.1.3 Organizational Structure 2-8-12
- A.2.8 Sexual Harassment 2-8-12
- A.2.65 Secure Care Shift Differential Pay 2-24-12
- C.1.17 Monitoring and Use of SmartZone System (700 and 800 MHz Radios) 2-22-12
- C.2.14 Tool Control Program 2-27-12
- D.10.33 State Council for the Interstate Compact on Juveniles 2-8-12

Shreveport Times Pass the pimientto, please

As promised in a recent issue of "What's Up, Doc," below is the story about Dr. Livers' aunt, Margery Whitehurst, and her recipe for pimientto cheese, that recently appeared in the Shreveport Times. If you whip up a batch, please let us know how it turned out. —The Editor



Margery Whitehurst, 89, of Shreveport, poses with a sandwich made with her pimientto cheese recipe. / Val Horvath Davidson/The Times

Written by Devin White

Adding a few special ingredients can make all the difference in a basic recipe. **Margery Whitehurst**, of Shreveport, helps her pimientto cheese shine with two simple steps.

"I use the red pepper and garlic salt, a dash of each one. That's what makes it good," she

said. "You can eat it with crackers but normally we have sandwiches."

Whitehurst learned to make the recipe from her mother-in-law and for 50 years she's been whipping up this classic sandwich spread.

A traditional Southern dish, there are dozens of variations on the basic recipe, which typically consists of sharp cheddar cheese, mayonnaise and pimientos.

Margery Whitehurst's Pimiento Cheese

2 cups sharp cheddar cheese (finely shredded)
1 (4-oz. jar) pimientos
Mayonnaise to taste
Red pepper, dash
Garlic salt, dash
Blend all ingredients to the consistency of your liking.

Alexandria Regional Office

Valentine's Day was celebrated with a luncheon provided by supervisors. **RM Johnny Qualls** gave all the ladies in the office a long stemmed red rose.

RM Johnny Qualls, AC 4 Sharon Graham and **AC 3 Cassaundra Conston** attended "Site Coordinator Training" held at Central Office.

PPO3 Rodney McNeal accepted a position with the federal prison in Pollock. A fish fry luncheon was planned for Rodney's departure. We will miss him and wish him the best of luck with his future endeavors.



Roses in Tallulah, thanks to Martha Hattaway.

Baton Rouge Regional Office

This month Baton Rouge OJJ offices are still a work in progress. We are adjusting to the transition and anxiously awaiting our move back to our building. The contractors are hard at work and the progress is really coming along well. We have walls now and the plans look great! It seems that we will be moving back in sometime in April, fingers crossed... In the meantime we will continue to work hard to meet the mission.

Employee of The Month



Congratulations to our newest **Transport Officer, Gerard Landry**. He was selected as **Employee of the Month** by his coworkers because of his friendly demeanor, willingness to help his fellow officers,

and his jovial personality. Gerard joined the Baton Rouge team in December and has been a great addition since day one. Congratulations Gerard, keep up the good work!

Trainings Attended

SSC Jennifer Anderson and **PPO Steven Dukes** participated in training for the members of the Faith Based Initiative Program, which utilizes local community leaders from various organizations, including churches, schools and service organizations, to mentor males in the secure facilities, who are about to be released. These mentors work with the families in the homes that the youth will be returning to, as well as going into the secure facilities to assist the youth in the reintegration process.

Farewell

We bid a bittersweet farewell to **PPO Andrew Boner**. We are saddened to see you go, but we wish you much continued success in your new venture.

Happy Birthday

We celebrated the birthdays of **Administrative Assistant Shalanda Wells**, **Transport Officer Paul Kopan** and **PPO Larry Aaron**. Happy birthday to all of you and we wish you many, many more.

Bridge City Center for Youth

Congratulations

Instructor Gregory Williams says Bridge City Center for Youth's Riverside Alternative School would like to congratulate youths **Hank D.** and **Dayan S.** for earning their GEDs.

Noted Chef Visits Culinary Arts Program

Family Liaison Donna Bowie thanks **Chef Alfred Singleton**, Chef de Cuisine at Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse, for taking time to visit with the youth in the culinary arts program at Bridge City. "As an agency, we are constantly embracing partnerships to assist youth in redirecting their lives towards responsible citizenship," she wrote.

Chef Singleton responded, "Thank you all for having me. I enjoyed visiting with the youth there. I am looking forward to my next visit. Your facilities look great and the kids were excited about food... I can do demos, help Chef Sonnier out with his projects or teach certain techniques to the students."

Now You Know

By **Administrative Program Coordinator Eddie Newsome**

Scientific Explanation of Leap Year

Did you know that Leap Year is a year that contains one additional day in order to keep the calendar year in sync with the seasonal or astronomical year? Leap years are necessary to keep the planet aligned with Earth's revolutions around the sun.

While the calendar assumes the Earth revolves around the sun every 365 days, it actually takes the Earth a bit longer - 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds. If the calendar were not adjusted for the extra six hours by adding an extra day approximately every four years, the calendar would slowly shift and the seasons would no longer be aligned with the traditional months. Without Leap Days, the calendar would be off by 24 days within 100 years.

Easter Lilies

If you chose to buy a white lily for Easter, one that has several unopened buds and leaves along the stem will last longer. When the lily is kept inside, the buds and leaves will open and stay fresher for longer.



A very common question about Easter Day: why does the date change so much year by year? This is because Easter is calculated as the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after March 21 - so now you know!

Central Office

Farewell to Attorney Cynthia Eyre

Central Office wished **Attorney Cynthia Eyre** a bittersweet, fond farewell on her departure from OJJ. Cynthia, who, in her other persona raises Thoroughbred race horses, left OJJ for the greener pastures of the Civil Service Commission, where she now serves as General Counsel.



Above, Cynthia, right, as a charter member of the central office group, The What, rocks to the music. Below, she strikes a pose.



If you have ever been in a training session conducted by Cynthia, you know that she is highly organized and knowledgeable, very well-versed in the law, and absolutely an original. Always willing to help when needed, with commonsense advice on employment and ethics issues, Cynthia is a true professional. OJJ may hire another lawyer but we can never replace Cynthia, whose legendary, unbridled sense of humor, ability to turn a phrase and perfect comedic delivery, set her apart.

Morale Committee Kicks Off Employee Fund and Serves Breakfast

To kick off the central office's annual employee fund drive, the Morale Committee raised everyone's spirits with a beautiful breakfast of scrambled eggs, grits, sausage and biscuits.

We appreciate all the committee does to keep spirits high (and tummies full). Members of the Morale Committee are **Marvel Adams, Suzie Durrett, Nita Franklin-Shanklin, NyKisha Franklin, Shirley Jackson, Katie Kirkpatrick Justice, Phyllis Martello and Shaeki Shanklin.**



Pictured are, serving, Marvel Adams, Mitzi Sonnier and Suzie Durrett; guests Lynne Geromini, Lisa Patterson and Annette Arthur.

Town Hall Meeting

Dr. Mary Livers conducted a town hall meeting for central office staff to bring us up to date on budget issues and other items. She is always open to questions, comments and suggestions. We had a full house, and a great deal of interest.



The Sonniers Go Backstage to Meet Country Music Star

The Sonniers - **Mitzi** is an **Administrative Assistant in CQIS**, central office, and **Ron** is the **Bridge City Culinary Arts instructor** - recently met country music singer-songwriter **Ronnie Dunn** at the Hard Rock Café in New Orleans. Mitzi relates:

"We had the opportunity to go to Ronnie Dunn's concert at the Hard Rock Café and were also fortunate to receive Meet and Greet passes.

I went to high school in Tulsa with Ronnie's wife, Janine. We remained in contact from high school until Ron and I moved to Baton Rouge. That was over 25 years ago. Janine started dating Ronnie Dunn and they eventually got married, moved to Nashville and the rest is history for her. We tried to contact her through friends and family, but didn't have any luck.



Mitzi and Ron Sonnier at Ronnie Dunn's concert. "This is what two 'ole rock and rollers' look like," Mitzi said. "We had meet and greet passes.....it was a blast!"

Ron and I didn't know if we would be meeting him, but we took a photo of Janine just in case. Ron also wrote down our phone number, address, email addresses. When we walked up to him, I handed him the photo and explained that I knew his wife. He looked at it and screamed...OMG and laughed. I

asked him to give the information to Janine and he said he would. We will see. I hope that she gets our information and we can renew our friendship."

Hammond Regional Office

Welcome

Hammond OJJ welcomed two new PPOs. **PPO1 Sarah Gilberti** has been assigned Hammond City Court and **PPO1 Julie Church** has been assigned Slidell City Court. We're very happy to have them on board!

Youth Highlight

By **SSCIV Lori Wagner**

Michael M. is an outstanding young man. He has overcome many of his prior negative behaviors to excel while on probation. He has addressed his substance abuse issues, quite aggressively, through substance abuse outpatient treatment provided by the Social Services Counselor at Hammond OJJ. He has not tested positive for any substance since his initial clean date last fall.

Michael has learned how his feelings and thoughts control his behavior and implemented those skills in his day to day life. He and his family have participated in family counseling and addressed many of the underlying issues causing Michael to use drugs and to have contact with probation and parole. His former **PPO, Shirley Verberne**, motivated and supported Michael and his family through the recommended services.

Michael is outgoing and likes to work on small engines. He often works on his four-wheeler, recently fixing the motor, and selling it to buy a car. His present goals include getting his learners' permit so he can eventually get his driver's license and make use of the car he has purchased. He also wants to spend time working on the car to fix it up.

His educational reports are positive, as he has brought his GPA up from a 1.3 to a 2.0 and hopes to be at least a 3.0 overall before the semester ends. He is interested in going to the local technical college to learn a trade, possibly mechanics. He is very interested in becoming a dual enrollment student for the next school year, if his age permits.

Michael and his family have worked very diligently to address their issues. With focused efforts and continued progress, Michael may be allowed to close his probation case earlier than expected due to his extraordinary efforts in following all the rules and regulations of probation and parole. There are many hoping for his successful, early closure. GREAT JOB Michael!!

Staff Spotlight

By SSCIV Lori Wagner

This month we are celebrating **PPO3 Mark Davis**. Mark lived in Houston, Texas until the age of 13. His family often moved due to his father's work. After living in Texas, his family relocated to Birmingham, Alabama for a few years, then to Muskogee, Oklahoma in Mark's senior year of high school. At 19, his family again moved, to New Orleans. Mark has been a resident of this state since then. He attended Southeastern Louisiana University, where he dabbled in several majors, before deciding on Social Work. He graduated in 1998, receiving his BA in Social Work. From there, Mark worked with the FINS (Families In Need of Service) Office, until he was "wooded" by former **Hammond RM Bob Duncan**, to come over to Juvenile Probation (OYD, at that time).

Mark first discovered his desire to work with this population during his summer job at a horse ranch in Texas. There, he taught adolescents to ride and handle horses and quickly realized their amenability to change their behaviors, thoughts, and feelings, versus adults, who are often stagnated in their desire to change. It was through this experience that

Mark became more devoted to his aspirations of wanting to help adolescents change their lives.

One of Mark's hobbies is travelling. He has traveled all over the continental United States. Last summer, he toured Yellowstone National Park and couldn't believe how pristine and beautiful nature is there. Mark is spontaneous in his travels, often leaving out on a Thursday afternoon with no particular place in mind, sometimes not returning back home until it's time for work on Monday. His eyes are set on an Alaskan tour in the very near future.

Mark is upbeat and has a joke or story to get everyone laughing. He spreads good humor and laughter every place he goes. He is liked by the courts in Covington, so much so, he got homemade baklava from one of the local judges for his birthday! Way to go Mark! Your enthusiasm and dedication is contagious to everyone around. Thanks for all your efforts and dedication to the youth of this region.

What's Going On...

Hammond OJJ staff helped a youth obtain the items needed to attend the Youth Challenge Program (YCP).

PPO3 Tiffany James reports that a youth on her caseload recently graduated from the National Guard Youth Challenge Program. While there, he received his GED and completed his community service work. He completed all requirements of the Youth Service Bureau Crossroads program (including the Law Related Education Class, Substance Abuse Focus Group, and community service work).

PPO3 Kevin Kulivan reports that a youth on his caseload successfully completed the YCP program and the majority of the goals on his service plan. He is back on track and doing well at home.

PPO2 Denise Wall reports that two youth on her caseload are currently at YCP in Carville. Both took their GED test in March and graduated from the program on March 24.

PPO3 Kasey Wall reports that two youth from her caseload earned early releases from probation. Both completed all regular and special conditions of probation, were recommended to the court for early termination, and were approved by the judge.

PPO2 Jamie Oertel reports that a youth from her caseload graduated from YCP in January and earned his GED.

PPO3 Amy Johnson reports two youth from her caseload graduated from Drug Court. Amy has also collected over \$900 in restitution payments in the past few months.

PPO3 Penny Buniff reports a youth on her caseload obtained his GED. Another youth successfully completed the program at Odyssey House. She also reports that she has a youth participating in the Models for Change Program at Northshore Technical College, who is doing great! Penny has also collected over \$1000 in restitution payments over the past month.

**CQIS Administrative Program Director
Lynne Geromini shares bits of wisdom
from the 2012 Old Farmer's Almanac:**

2012 @ a glance - people are talking about:

- Ladies unwinding in "woman caves"
- Custom-framed portraits of DNA with bar codes that reveal maternal ancestral origins when scanned
- Personalized candies with photos
- Room-size closets with TVs and refrigerators
- **Technology cleanses: unplugging for a short time (hilarious!!!!)**

Models for Change

The article below was recently posted on the MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change website. Hammond OJJ has been working hard, trying to make a difference in these clients lives.

Career Development Program Influences Positive Change in Adjudicated Youth

Feb 6, 2012, Louisiana Models for Change

Northshore Technical Community College in Greensburg, La., started a career development program in the fall of 2011 for adjudicated youth, youth found by a judge to have committed a violation of criminal law and currently under the supervision of the Office of Juvenile Justice within their community, that has set eight children on a path to success through guidance, education and encouragement.

"Our program has given these youth a chance to focus and excel in areas they're interested in," said **Sharon Hornsby**, dean of the Florida Parishes campus. "Their excellent grades and strengthened confidence are rewarding for everyone involved, and you can see the difference it makes in these kids."

Through the program and a grant from *Models for Change*, these youth had the opportunity to enroll in educational programs at Northshore Technical Community College and gain valuable skills in areas including veterinary medicine, mechanical engineering, certified nursing assistant and automotive technology. Students gained skills and certifications for promising careers and some have received job offers from major companies like Toyota and Volvo.

"Most of the time, the situation these kids find themselves in is not due to personality or ability, but instead to external factors like family dynamics or their surrounding environment," said **Karolyn Pinsel Harrell**,

program director. "When we're able to provide mentorship to these kids, encourage them and show them that people want to see them succeed, they respond to that and strive to achieve their full potential. It's incredible to see what they can do when given the opportunity."

In some cases, judges overseeing progress of the individuals have said that because they showed such a great deal of success and commitment, they would not be required to enter into Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice secure care, which is reserved for youth deemed by a judge or by OJJ to be a risk to public safety and/or not amenable to treatment in a less restrictive setting. Youth housed in OJJ secure care facilities attend school and are constantly under direct supervision.

Youth participating in the career development program are 16-22 years old and are considered "low-risk." The program aims to steer them in the right direction and prevent them from penetrating deeper into the juvenile justice system.

Jetson Center for Youth

Here We Grow Again!

OJJ has entered a partnership with the Southern University (SU) Agriculture Department. Through this partnership, our youth have been introduced to many facets of farming and land cultivation. This course entails both lecture and laboratory components.

The Southern University-Baton Rouge instructors teach youth about soil, fertilizer, mulch, gardening design, and plant procedures. Then, youth are taken out to the greenhouse and offered the opportunity to put what they learned into action by planting both flowers and produce. The two-hour classes are held every Tuesday and Thursday.

Jetson instructors **Mary Ann Webb**, **Dwayne Nedie** and **Willie Etta Gerald**s are all members of the JCY family who assist in overseeing the youth during this time.

The youth recently completed Phase I of the program, and were presented with certificates. Those present were SU's **Dr. Eubanks**, **OJJ Asst. Secretary Dr. Girard Melancon**, **Director of Education Kim Mims** and **Jetson Director Daron Brown**.

Challenge Course Training Held

Jetson Center for Youth recently hosted a Challenge Course Training at Baton Rouge City Police Training Academy. **John Preston**, **Swanson LAMOD Coordinator**, facilitated this great event.

The following staff participated:

Swanson - Gwen Gene and Detrick Massey; Bridge City - Nerissa Cole and Deidra Willis; Jetson - Malachi Gee, Linda Harrell, Ivory White, Fouad Harb, Wilfred Mack, Oscar King, Ron Jarrell, Alonzo Jones, Cherise Gougisha and Assistant Director Angela Sutton.

Director of Staff Development Fran Martin and **LAMOD Coordinator Arlona Wells-Morgan** from central office also shared quality time with everyone.

Mr. Preston started training with a check-in and always asked if everyone was alright after each activity. The training was professional, the instructor was knowledgeable and most of all, we had fun. Activities included blind fold, running, jumping, shooting balls, and holding hands. Prior to the activities everyone enjoyed warmup exercises and felt comfortable prior to the challenge. By the end of the training everyone was encouraged to bring what they learned back to their facility to facilitate with youth as well as staff. Mr. Preston stated he has never seen such a motivated and competitive group. Even when one group seemed to fall behind the other group encouraged them to continue. All

participants successfully completed the training and received Training for Trainers certificates. The two day training gave everyone the opportunity to participate, work together, share ideas, develop bonds and communicate to create a cognitive team. We all are grateful to have such a knowledgeable and professional instructor who kept everyone involved throughout the entire training. Again thanks, Mr. Preston, we all are looking forward to another training in the near future.

“Lift Every Voice” Theme of Black History Program

Scenic Alternative High School celebrated it's annual Black History Program in February. The theme was "Lift Every Voice." We had an anointing speaker, Dr. Ora Bradford, who enlightened our hearts, minds, and souls.

The outstanding part of the program was honoring our own Black African American notables with presentations by our youth:

Reese C. - George Washington Carver

Ranell B. - Charles Drew

Qa'Terral W. - Lonnie Johnson

Jalil W. - Benjamin Banneker

Edward N. - Mark Dean

Deondric B. - Fredrick Jones

Reonna F. - Garrett Morgan

Closing remarks were given by **Director of Education Kim Mims** and **Deputy Director Belinda Thomas**.

Youth Success Story

By Scarlett M. Pryer, B.S. Edu., Social Service Counselor IV

Here is an update on one of our youth who is interested in the Job Corps Program. I have been conversing with released youth, **Timothy C.** and his mother, Stephanie C., about coordinating his orientation date and time with Carville Job Corps Academy. I informed them that the program agreed to move him up on the waiting list and get him

in early to begin the first phase of getting accepted in the program.

Timothy was very enthusiastic about the opportunity. He had all the information requested for the orientation, including his new state identification card. Timothy was dressed in slacks, cotton button-down shirt and tie. He informed me that his trade interest is nursing and that he would like to become an registered nurse. I let him know that Job Corps can definitely make his nursing dreams come true, if he stays focused and committed to earning his certification and degree. Tim assured me that he is in it for the long haul.

Timothy and his mother called later and thanked our facility staff again for continuing to keep an interest in Tim, even though he is no longer in our care.

I was glad to be a part of assisting one of our youth that definitely has a bright future ahead.

Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office

Congratulations

The **Lafayette Region** earned a score of 100% compliance on its annual safety audit!

PPO Bret Gould participated in the Appleseed Rifle Marksmanship course. He achieved the status of Rifleman, an accomplishment achieved by only 5% of the people, nationwide, who take the course.

Congratulations to **PPO Michelle Deshotel** who recently welcomed a grandbaby!

Thanks for Going Above and Beyond

Kudos to **PPO George Hebert**, for his spirit of selflessness! George is always willing to assist others and is one of the first people to volunteer when needed. Recently, he stepped up to assist with a last-minute difficult

transport, which caused him to be on the road VERY early in the morning. He never misses an opportunity to help someone and always has a positive attitude. George is definitely modeling the way in the Lafayette Office!

What's Going On

PPO Nick Landry reports that his client, **Erick A.**, recently graduated from the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program with two stars. Erick plans to enroll in the Job Corps program to continue his education, and to earn a trade as a mechanic. His long-term plans are to be a diesel mechanic for the United States Army. Nick is very proud of Erick!

PPO Kevin Broussard volunteered at the Acadiana Area Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure held in Lafayette. Kevin was at Girard Park at 5 a.m. that day, and did not leave until the festivities ended at 12 p.m. Kevin said that it felt good to volunteer on a Saturday for such a good cause.

The Louisiana Juvenile Officers Association held its annual conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Lafayette, and Lafayette OJJ was well-represented. **PPSs Robert Guirard and Chris Potier** and **PPOs Kevin Broussard, Lynette Broussard, Jeffery Edwards, Cassandra Gardiner, Ben Guidry and Scott Peyton** attended. Cassandra Gardiner was even elected 3rd Vice President of the board of directors for the upcoming year.

PPO Steve Neef highly recommends the movies "The Grace Card," "Courageous," "Facing the Giants," and "Fireproof." He believes the youth in our facilities, as well as the staff who care for them, could benefit significantly from these excellent and inspiring movies. He reports that the staff and residents at a local facility watched some of these flicks and the feedback was very positive.

Lake Charles Regional Office

Thanks for Jobs Well Done

PPO Delisa Clark, Program Specialist Karli Pullard and Social Worker Claude Devillier recently presented an all-day Mental Health Training for the Lake Charles office. They were well prepared, provided delicious morning and afternoon snacks (very generous), and made the material relevant to actual job performance. Lots of preparation was evident. **JOB WELL DONE.**

Thanks to **PPCT Instructor/PPO Fred Fontenot**, who led two Defensive Tactics refresher classes. Fred prepared for training by preparing visual aids (videos on computer/large screen TV) and reviewing related policy.

PPO Monet Newman and PPO Alexis Heflin recently presented the Juveniles Accepting Responsibility for Shoplifting (J.A.R.S) program in Beauregard Parish, in an effort to deter shoplifting and educate youth about shoplifting laws.

PPO Ronald Gilchrist, PPO Jeff Haley, PPO Garrick Chambers and PPO Fred Fontenot recently played basketball with the Methodist Children's Home (MCH) youth. All the boys in the program participated at one time or another, and EVERYONE played! The boys wanted to play "us against them." We played five on five, with a two man rotation on the sideline, so some of the youth played with the PPOs. The probation officers had facility staff make some poor calls and had the youth work on solutions and compromises. **Garrick** was able to talk a Dept. of Children & Family Services (DCFS) youth into removing a lip-ring which was causing problems at the facility. (Way to go Garrick!) **Ronald** was the star of the show, making most of the points for the Probation Officer team. (It is believed that Ronald's team won every game.) **Fred** also doubled in the role of "Coach," as he occasionally stopped playing to assist youth with rotating

in and out of participation in the game. **Jeff** encouraged youth to play hard and to hustle. He made sure that every youth had a chance to play by assisting with rotation on the PPO team. Also, it was a teachable moment: the youth at MCH were receptive to ways they could improve their basketball skills, and the PPOs tried to allow for all skill levels, while ensuring that the kids kept to the general rules of the game. At the conclusion of the game, several kids expressed how thankful they were that the probation officers came out. They saw that the PPOs are not "out to get them in more trouble" or just show up to hand out lectures. The PPOs admit that this was a professional's physical fitness challenge: running full court and trying to keep up with the youth.

Youth Challenge Program is a Challenge for PPOs Too!

Our officers have been actively recruiting kids to consider interviewing for the Youth Challenge Program (YCP) for academic enrichment, for self-discipline, to escape unfortunate home environments, and to avoid going further into the juvenile justice system, through OJJ's legal custody. This program has yielded great change for our kids and assists us to meet our mission. At the present **PPO Jeff Haley** has **Kobie B.** and **Stormy T.** currently enrolled in YCP. **PPO Angela Stevens** has **Candice C.** and **Carl B.** in YCP. **PPO Garrick Chambers** has **Ashley M., Justin B.** and **Joshua D.** currently enrolled in YCP. **PPO Ronald Gilchrist** has **Skyler B.** enrolled in YCP. **PPO Fred Fontenot** has **Caleb B.** enrolled. **PPO Hollie Comeaux** has **Brook B.** in YCP. GOOD JOB to those PPOs who continue to promote this program to the kids.

It often takes persuasive verbal skills to help kids and their families realize that this particular voluntary, residential, short-term placement is in their best interest. Not all are enthusiastic to go, despite their need for the program, and not all PPOs are successful at this difficult **Motivational Interviewing**

technique required to get kids to interview and to stay, once they get there! So, congratulations and much appreciation to our successful motivators/salesmen!

Further, much appreciation to **PPO Fred Fontenot** and **PPO Monet Newman** who volunteered for the Sunday YCP transports - it was a 10 hour work day on a Sunday!

Community Outreach

RM Ann Vick has been promoting OJJ in the community and has been presenting the OJJ PowerPoint to civic organizations, who welcome her, including Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs.

PPO Monet Newman and **PPS Melissa Cross** attended the recent McNeese State University Career Fair to recruit interns, prospective employees, participate in university functions, spread our mission, and make the public aware of what we do for the community.

Several Lake Charles OJJ staff volunteered to participate in Bowl for Kids' Sake, an annual bowling fundraiser for Big Brothers/Big Sisters. **PPO Garrick Chambers, Program Specialist Karli Pullard, PPO Fred Fontenot, PPO Angie Stevens, PPO Hollie Comeaux** and **PPO Ronald Gilchrist** participated. **RM Ann Vick** also attended the fundraiser to cheer on the team.



The Bowl for Kids' Sake scoreboard.

Each bowler was required to submit at least a \$30 donation through sponsorship or personal contribution. So, this was generosity

demonstrated through giving of their weekend time as well as their finances!



Bowl for Kids Sake volunteers were: back row: Hollie Comeaux, Angie Stevens, Fred Fontenot, Ronald Gilchrist, Garrick Chambers. Front row: Karli Pullard, Meagan Lirette, holding Major Chambers, son of Garrick and Jonn, and Jonn Chambers, holding their niece.



PPO Jeff Haley volunteered for the Shriners Hospital for Children's IHOP National Pancake Day. All patrons got a free short stack of pancakes, with any donation to the Shriners. Jeff and other Masons, Shriners and clowns

made balloons for patrons of IHOP. This is a very noble organization and Jeff is a very active member in the community. Below are photos from the event.



Officer Attends Prom



PPO Alexis Heflin accompanied Transitional Living Program resident **Gerald M.** (OJJ youth) to his senior prom at his high school, as a condition of his attendance. He is a big athlete for his school and well-known to his peer group. He was grateful to be able to attend this once-in-a-lifetime rite of passage with his classmates.

Our Officers Rock!

PPO Garrick Chambers demonstrated kindness and chivalry by offering to change a blown out tire on a female officer's personal vehicle and assisted her in getting to work, despite the challenges that morning. He offered assistance without having to be asked. THANKS, Garrick!

PPO Stefanie Krygowski remains in high demand in the southern part of the state. She again assisted with PPCT trainings and also completed annual weapons inspections in the Lafayette office. Further, **Stefanie** completed Glock armorer re-certification and received her certificate of accomplishment. All of this, and she still keeps all of her caseload responsibilities met!

PPO Fred Fontenot has been a silent hero to many officers in the Lake Charles Region, as well as to our **Transport Officer Kelly St. Germain**. Fred volunteered to take on the Transport Coordinator role, with minimal back-up needed from assigned officers in times of his absence from the office. Kelly expresses sincere gratitude for Fred's ability to motivate him, effectively communicate with him, advocate for him, and continue to be patient with him. Fred has mentored Kelly for a long time and is well respected by Kelly.

PPO Fred Fontenot is working on a chart to input weighted totals per assigned cases to assist with supervisors' assignment of cases. Fred has a gift!

PPO Ronald Gilchrist has a new supervision case, in which two juveniles were arrested and adjudicated for killing a bird from an endangered species, the Whooping Crane. Through this arrest, Ronald became really involved and helped the two male youth research the bird and what it means to be endangered, as a form of restorative justice.



The restorative justice assignment is a 500 word, quality essay regarding efforts being made by the Department of

Wildlife and Fisheries to preserve the whooping crane. The two also are expected to do community service at White Lake Conservatory Facility in Gadon, LA, and they are being encouraged to join 4-H so that they may attend a camp in Grand Chenier to explore wildlife ecology.

This case really stood out and resonated with the staff. Probation is about making mistakes but still learning, changing, and growing after all. Ronald and the Court are both taking advantage of an opportunity to educate and build empathy within these young men. It has been a learning experience for all of us!

Celebration

We celebrated Valentine's Day with a small office breakfast buffet. We wished everyone a Happy Valentine's morning and wished everyone a good start to a good day. Some staff participated in **Curious Cupid** to show an exchange of love and good will. This was a **morale and team building-booster** event.



Monroe Regional Office

RM Patty Newman and **PPS Gail Wilson**, accompanied by **DAS Carolyn Lewis**, attended the Open House at Ware Youth Center. Youth from the Intensive Residential Program provided a tour of the facility. **Dr. Mary Livers** was among the guest speakers.

Monroe OJJ staff participated in the video conference introducing the Coordinated System of Care/Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership. LBHP is a new approach to obtaining behavioral health services for OJJ youth. In addition, Monroe OJJ staff participated in CSoc Clinical Advisor Training.

The following Officers recently qualified on the POST Course: **PPO2 Steve Pelfrey**, **PPO2 Gregory Colvin**, **PPO2 Jeremy Fox**, **PPO2 Cheryl Keyes** and **PPO3 Hannah Dozier**. **POST Instructor PPO3 Jennifer Bible** and **NRA Instructors PPS Karl Wallace** and **PPO3 Joel McNair** conducted the training, held at the Richland Parish Sheriff's Office Range.

PPO2 Mark Miller recently participated in a Civil War Battle Reenactment at Lake D'Arbonne State Park in Farmerville. Mark is a history buff, and has participated in live reenactments for the past 12 years. Reenactors from Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas and Texas were involved in the "Battle of D'Arbonne Landing", complete with an encampment and authentic weaponry. Mark is looking forward to participating in the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Shiloh in Tennessee later this spring.



Pictured is Private Mark Miller of the Union Army.

Natchitoches Regional Office

Employee of The Month



PPO3 Stanley Cook

SSW5 Nelda Graham presented “Jobs and Duties of an OJJ Social Worker” to the students at Frankie Ray Jackson Technical Center for the Black History Month Celebration. **PPO Kelvin Jones** attended with Nelda Graham.



Valentine's Day Party



Staff enjoyed snacks for Valentine's Day.

PPO2 Kelvin Jones at the Black History Month presentation at the technical center. Below, the Gloved One made an appearance at the celebration; a display depicting some who struggled for civil rights.



Community Involvement



PPOs Heather Christophe, Ashley Meacham, Brenda Sarpy and Deanna Williams attended a Mardi Gras celebration at Weaver Elementary School.

RM Randall Hill, PPS Kristen McComic and several other officers attended Ware Youth Center's Open House.



The Benedict College Choir of North Carolina performed at Ware Youth Center Group Home. PPOs Heather Christophe, Brenda Sarpy and Deanna Williams, and youth enjoyed the performance of songs of praise.



PPOs Heather Christophe, Brenda Sarpy and Deanna Williams with the Benedict College Choir, which came from North Carolina to perform for Ware Youth Center. PPOs as well as youth enjoyed a day of song and praise.

PPO Stanley Cook received his PPCT Defensive Tactics Instructor Certification recertification in Lafayette.

SSW5 Nelda Graham attended the Social Work Conference in Baton Rouge, and also assisted with PEN (Parents Empowerment Network) at Shreveport OJJ.

Birthday Greetings

We celebrated the March birthday of PPS Kristen McComic.

More predictions from the 2012 Old Farmers' Almanac:

The Fashion Forecast:

- Garments that can be worn backward or upside down
- Seasonless fabrics to wear all year
- Casual and elegant combinations (fishermen's sweaters with velvet skirts, blazers and opera gloves)
- "Convertible" shirt collars (they disappear when tucked in)

On women we'll see:

- Tailored trouser suits
- Slip dresses and long-sleeve sheath dresses

New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office

Employee of the Month



Congratulations! **Vera Chapman Seals** is New Orleans OJJ's **Probation Officer for February**. Vera has served as a PPO for over 20 years. She is a team player who displays loyalty and dedication to staff, as well as to the youth and families she serves. Vera has the green thumb in the office. She trots about pulling limp leaves off plants and watering their pots in an effort to keep them perky. Perky? A personality trait such as her own.

Striving For Excellence

Congratulations to **PPO Douglas Black** for high academic achievement during the 2011 spring and fall semesters, for earning a 3.75 grade point average at Southern University at New Orleans. A



celebration in his honor will be held April 18, for making the Dean's List. The staff at Region One is so proud of Douglas's accomplishments. OJJ encourages Douglas to continue to strive for excellence.

Black History Wall of Modest

Black History Month, or National African American History Month, is an annual celebration of achievements by black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. history. New Orleans OJJ created the Black History Wall of Modest for youth, parents and staff to enjoy, with noted historians and other prominent African Americans displayed to enlighten everyone of progress made throughout history. Also on display was a

copy of Dr. Martin Luther King's *"I Have a Dream Speech"* with copies available for all.



The Wall of Modest

Shreveport Regional Office

Employee of the Month

Transport Officer Amanda Lummus

PPO3 Terri Harber was promoted to supervisor.

Shreveport OJJ staff participated in training by video on the Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership and Coordinated System of Care, presented by **DAS Karen Stubbs**.

PPO3 John Whitlock and **PPO3 Charles Herrmann** conducted firearms practice at the Caddo Sheriff's Academy.

Curfew checks were conducted by the Shreveport OJJ probation officers, guided by **PPS Steve Martino** and **PPS Guy May**.

Happy Birthday

We celebrated several birthdays:

PPO2 Holly Black; **Administrative Coordinator 3 Karen Smith**; **RM Kristi Martin** and **PPO1 Cornealious McSwain**.

The 2012 Old Farmer's Almanac predicts men's fashions:

On men we'll see:

- Rumpled-looking casual wear
- Worn-out T-shirts (*nothing new here...*)
- Leggings (*REALLY? – The Editor*)

Swanson Center for Youth

Employees of the Month

Principal William Lee nominated two employees for February's Employees of the Month.

SSD Regional Coordinator Holly York, because she obtained Promethean Boards for four classrooms, secured material and supplies for classrooms and the facility from closed SSD sites, and she provided training on new technology for all teachers.

Assistant Principal Victor Cooper, for overseeing the education department for seven months while Mr. Lee was detailed as Facility Director. He directed the relocation of teachers and materials during schedule and assignment changes, working with OJJ staff to assign GED students to work details, and anticipated and oversaw completion of tasks that are essential to maintain the smooth operation of the school.

CCS Purchases Track Uniforms

The CCS staff, led by **Health Services Administrator Kevin DeBruhl**, raised funds to purchase uniforms for the youth on the track team, in time for a recent track meet.



SCY 2012 Southside High Panther Track Team in their new uniforms.



Tallulah Regional Office

Tallulah OJJ completed several training sessions recently.

Placement Training was conducted at our office by our Regional Program Specialists, **Walteree Barnes, Jan Crain, Monique Lacour, Karli Pullard** and **Joseph Powe**.

Officers also participated in the Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership/CSOC training, completed the SAVRY Booster training, and completed PPCT Refresher.

PPO Terri Berry and **PPO Jessica Southern** attended the Site Coordinator Training.

PPO Robert Johnson completed his certification for the American Heart Association First Aid and CPR trainer requirements.

Staff were able to attend the "Celebration of Change" held at Swanson.

Also during this month, Tallulah OJJ completed the QA Safety Audit.

As always, after our monthly staff meeting, we eat together and if we have a birthday that month, we celebrate. This month's honoree was **PPO Terri Berry**. Everyone enjoyed Italian cream cake with ice cream.

Tallulah OJJ enjoyed a visit from **Dr. Livers** and **Asst. Secretary Dr. Girard Melancon**. Those in the office that day enjoyed a casual conversation and lunch, Mexican style, with our Deputy Secretary and Assistant Secretary.

Several Tallulah employees are participating in preparations for the Madison Parish Relay for Life. **PPS Margo Corulla** and **AC3 Martha Hattaway** are on the relay committee. They have been busy coordinating the teams, relay entertainment, and other such planning duties for the American Cancer Society's "Relay for Life"

to be held April 13th. Other Tallulah employees plan to help with the relay.

Great Pumpkins Ride Again

Once again, **PPS Margo Corulla** has been decorating our famous break room "buddies." She added some new paint and decorations to the pumpkins to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and now they are decorated for Easter. Surprisingly, they are still in excellent shape and are not decomposing yet! Talk about recycling decorations!



Above, St. Patrick Day pumpkins. Below, Easter pumpkins.



Congratulations



Tallulah OJJ extends congratulations to **RM Ruth Stephens** on her new great grandbaby boy. **Lucas Napoleon Stephens** was born on March 6. He weighed 8 lbs., 7oz. He is the son of **David** and **Kelly Stephens**.

Thibodaux Regional Office

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to **Administrative Coordinator Kim Foret, Employee of the Month** for March. She is a valuable asset to our team here in Thibodaux.

PPO Summer M. Ferreria reports that two youth on her caseload, **Darrin W.** and **Callie M.**, have obtained their GEDs.

Signs of Spring....

Blooms in the Iris Garden at the Baton Rouge Botanical Garden in Independence Park.



A Success Story

By PPO Herman Matherne

A couple of days ago I ran into a young man, **Murray D.**, who was, at one time on probation out of Assumption Parish. He was working at Rouses Supermarket. As he was working, I noticed he was wearing his letterman's jacket from the high school he attended. He stopped me for a moment and asked how his prior probation officer, **Josef Nguyen**, and I were doing. The youth was proud to announce that along with just starting his job at the supermarket, he is attending the local university. He admitted that college is a bit harder than he expected but he is looking forward to working hard and earning his degree.

More gems from the 2012 Old Farmer's Almanac:

2012 @ a glance - people are talking about:

- Handwriting is better for the mind than typing
- Sharing or renting furniture, clothing and cards
- Libraries putting reserved books, tapes, and DVDs in public lockers for checkout after hours

Word of the Year: Halfalogue: half of a cell phone conversation, heard involuntarily

On the Farm – people are talking about:

- “Weed dating” – single ranchers and farmers looking for mates (or friends) amid produce rows, then switching rows to weed alongside other potential farmers



BCCY Culinary Arts & Occupations



Chef Ronald J. Sonnier, CEC Recipe of the Month

Winter has been real good to us in the Deep South and we really haven't experienced any bad weather like the rest of America has been going through. Thank God, for we have seen our share of devastation for a lifetime. I've been working very hard at getting my certification finalized to be able to instruct and proctor the ServSafe lecturing and testing and certify the students without getting outside tutors to come in and instruct and test. I finally got it done after a little tutoring, to get me up to speed on what's happening in the real world. Last year we certified seven students, and of four that have gone home, we have two students who are pursuing culinary careers - one in Opelousas and the other in Natchez, Mississippi. They both have called to tell me how important having their certification in ServSafe was in getting their jobs secured and how impressed their employers were that they had their certification. Both are in management training now and well on their way to a solid future in the hospitality industry.

Chef Alfred Singleton Jr., Chef de Cuisine at Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse, came to visit the students here at Bridge City and the reception from the students was very good. He took a good look at our program here and talked with the students about his life and growing up in the 9th Ward in New Orleans. He explained to the students that the world is theirs for the taking. He talked about what type of people he is looking to hire and reiterated the value of being certified in safe food handling; this is very important. His plans are to start a mentoring program with the students here at BCCY and we are really looking forward to getting it started. A big shout-out to **Assistant Secretary Girard Melancon** for making the contact with Chef Singleton and to **Family Liaison Donna Bowie** for accompanying him to BCCY.



Students and Chef Alfred Singleton, head chef from Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse, from left: Isaiah P., Brandon D., Larry W., Donna Bowie, Warren C., Chris T., Chef Singleton, Elijah N., Joseph W. and Chef Ron Sonnier.

PEACH COBLER

Yield: 10 to 12 servings
 Preparation: 30 minutes
 Bake: 45 minutes

3 (24.5 oz) cans of sliced peaches in light syrup, drained
 1 (7.5 oz) package complete buttermilk biscuit mix, such as Bisquick
 ½ cup water
 1 cup all purpose flour
 1 cup sugar
 ½ cup butter, melted
 1 egg, lightly beaten

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease a 13x9x2 inch baking dish. Cut peaches into 1 inch pieces. Place in prepared baking dish. In a medium bowl, combine biscuit mix and water, stirring until blended. Drop by teaspoonfuls over peaches. In another medium bowl, combine flour, sugar, butter and egg, stirring until blended. Pour mixture over biscuit mix and peaches. Bake at 350° for 35 to 45 minutes or until topping is golden brown.

**Chicken-Mushroom Quesadillas**

Serves 4

1 tbs. canola oil
 1 large onion, chopped
 8 ozs. white button mushrooms, coarsely chopped
 2 cups cooked diced skinless, boneless chicken breast
 1 tsp. ground cumin
 2 tsp. chili powder

1 tsp. dried oregano
 2 cups baby spinach leaves, coarsely chopped
 1/2 tsp. salt
 1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
 4 (10-inch) whole wheat flour tortillas
 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese (4 ozs.)
 salsa
 Sour cream

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions and mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, until the mushroom water has evaporated and they begin to brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute more. Add the chicken, cumin, chili powder and oregano and stir until all the spices are incorporated. Stir in the spinach, salt and pepper and cook until the spinach is wilted, about 2 minutes. Lay the tortillas on a flat surface. Sprinkle half of each tortilla with 2 tablespoons of shredded cheese. Spoon 1/4 of the chicken mixture on top of the cheese on each tortilla, then top each with two more tablespoons of cheese and fold the tortillas over into half-moons, pressing down lightly to seal them closed, forming quesadillas. Spray a large nonstick skillet with cooking spray and preheat over medium heat. Place 2 quesadillas in the pan and cook, turning once, until lightly browned and the cheese is melted, about 3 minutes per side. Repeat with the remaining quesadillas. Slice each quesadilla in half. Serve with the salsa and sour cream.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

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